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TRIBUTES TO THE MEMORY OF REV. JOHN MATTOCKS.

BY SEVERAL OF HIS ASSOCIATES.

[I. FROM A MEMOIR PUBLISHED IN THE ST. PAUL DAILY DISPATCH, NOV. 13, 1875, CONTRIBUTED BY J. F. WILLIAMS.]

Rev. JOHN MATTOCKS was born at Peacham, Vt., July 14, 1814. He was a son of ex-Gov. JOHN MATTOCKS, a descendant of one of the earliest settlers in New England, the MATTOCKS ancestor having arrived in Boston from England, about 1630. He graduated at Middlebury College, in his native state, in 1832, and first adopted the profession of law, which he studied, and was admitted to practice. But at this time, being powerfully impressed with religious convictions, he determined to enter the ministry, instead, and for that purpose studied theology with the celebrated Dr. BEMAN, of Troy, N. Y., and in 1838, graduated from the Theological Department of Yale College.

He soon after entered the work of the ministry as pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Keeseville, N. Y. He served his congregation for nearly 18 years, and until 1856, when he was called by the First Presbyterian Church, of St. Paul, as their pastor. Hon. GEORGE L. BECKER, one of the pioneer members of this church, first set on foot the movement which led to the call of Mr. MATTOCKS, Mr. B. having known the deceased at Keeseville.

Mr. MATTOCKS and family arrived here in August, 1856, and he commenced his labors as pastor of the church named. One after another of the (Protestant) clergymen who were then in active service in the pulpits of St. Paul, have died or resigned, and at his death he was the senior pastor of St. Paul,—his

pastorate of nineteen years being, for a western city, one of much more than usual length.

Mr. MATTOCKS was early identified with every good movement and cause in our city. He gave much attention to educational matters, and in March, 1860, (Rev. E. D. NEILL having resigned) he was elected Secretary of the Board of Education, and *ex officio* Superintendent of the Public Schools of the city. He filled this station with ability for over ten years, until our school system had extended and grown to such proportions as to demand the entire time of some official, and he resigned the post into other hands. During his term as Superintendent, he performed a vast amount of labor in organizing, controlling and directing our schools, at greatly inadequate compensation. The hundreds, or thousands, more properly, who have had business with him on school matters during that term, will remember his courtesy to all, his patience in settling and smoothing over all difficulties which were continually arising between parents and pupils, and teachers, his tact and rare good judgment in settling disagreements and vexed questions in the Board, his fidelity and earnestness in carrying along such an important and cherished system as our public schools had become during his term. The pupils of our city loved and revered Mr. MATTOCKS as perhaps no one in that relation will ever be again. His name was a household word, and his influence over them was unbounded and salutary. The history of our public schools, when written, must do full justice to these careful, conscientious, and faithful labors of Rev. JOHN MATTOCKS, for more than one decade, during their formative period.

The literary and scientific institutions of our city have also lost in his death, one of their most active supporters. Mr. MATTOCKS had strong antiquarian and scientific tastes. He was one of the oldest (active) members of the Minnesota Historical Society, having been a member since 1856, and one of the Executive Council since 1864, and was also President one year. He was a faithful and punctual worker for its success, and his experience and judgment in all literary or historical, and business matters coming before it, made him one of its most prominent and influential members. In his death the

society has sustained a loss which they must feel keenly—and, indeed, is almost irreparable, following so closely, too, after the loss of Rev. Dr. McMasters. And here it is worthy of remark that Mr. Mattocks formally announced to the society, at its meeting on Monday night, the death of that gentleman, his associate and co-laborer in its ranks for many years, in remarks so appropriate, so well chosen, and so touching, that the writer has seldom, if ever, listened to any eulogy more complete or so fitly pronounced; and could the language used be now copied, it would most accurately and justly describe the speaker's own services and virtues. Mr. Mattocks had a rare natural gift of good taste and judgment in such matters. It was known to his friends that he could, on any occasion like the above, state a subject more neatly, impressively, and clearly, than falls to the lot of but few, even, of experienced speakers. He always said, (as was written of another), "not a word too much, nor too little, and with the right word in the right place," fitly chosen and weighed, and with no affected ornateness of style, and no undue sentimentality. Perhaps one of the leading mental traits of Mr. Mattocks was his remarkable good judgment and discretion on all subjects. People sought his advice on every possible matter, out of his profession, literary, domestic, educational, sanitary, scientific, etc., and from his intimate knowledge of human character, and the human heart, and of "the fitness of things," he never failed to give to all thus seeking his aid, valuable counsel.

He was also an active member of the St. Paul Academy of Natural Sciences, and has given several lectures before it, on the subject of geology, in which he was well informed and skilled. He was also an active member of several other similar societies.

His cheerfulness was another trait worthy of mention, and one which made his society and conversation always so acceptable to his friends. He always looked on the "bright side" of every event, and seemed more hopeful even in times of disaster, than others. He would often speak of the amusing and funny points of any subject, in a manner evincing a keen sense of wit.

As a pulpit speaker, his discourses always avoided the sensational or ornate. They were plain, practical, and earnest enforcements of the truth of religion, and the duties of life, and always carefully prepared.

Mr. MATTOCKS possessed mental abilities of no common order. He was a close student, and careful observer of all subjects in which he took an interest. Had he devoted himself to the profession he first chose, and for which he was so well fitted by his mental endowments, he would have won eminence and wealth. But his convictions of duty led him to devote his life and abilities for the good and welfare of others, rather than himself, and now, when his life's labors have been suddenly ended, thousands will bless the memory of one who sacrificed the assurance of wealth and fame, for their spiritual good. The life of a clergyman is one of hard labor and personal sacrifice—too often illy rewarded, and sometimes unappreciated at the time. But beyond this life, and after life's labors have closed, the faithful pastor receives the *real* reward of his loving toil. In how many families of our city must the name of Mr. MATTOCKS be always revered? Of how many family histories does it form an honored part? The baptismal record, the nuptial vow, the funeral sermon,—events in the record of every family—these will bear his name to other generations of many a household of our State, to-day saddened with grief at the news of his death.

II. REMARKS BY HON. HENRY H. SIBLEY, AT A MEETING OF THE SOCIETY, DEC. 13, 1875.

MR. PRESIDENT: It becomes my sad duty, as chairman of the Committee on Obituaries, to announce officially the death of the Rev. JOHN MATTOCKS, which occurred since the last monthly meeting of this Board. He departed this life on the 13th day of November, 1875, at half-past one o'clock A. M.

The loss to the Society occasioned by the unexpected demise of that good man, cannot be over-estimated. He was, as you

are aware, one of the most able, estimable and valuable of its members.

Mr. MATTOCKS was born in Peacham, in the State of Vermont, in the year 1814, his father, Hon. JOHN MATTOCKS, being at the time, governor of the state. He graduated at Middlebury College in 1832, and thereafter commenced the study of the law in his father's office. Subsequently he removed to Troy, in the State of New York, where he became so profoundly impressed with the truths of the gospel, that he resolved to devote his life to the ministry. In accordance with this determination he studied theology with Dr. BEMAN of that city, and he graduated from the theological department of Yale College in 1838. He was installed pastor of the Presbyterian church in Keeseville, Clinton county, N. Y., and continued in that position for eighteen years, when he removed to this city in August, 1856; was called to the pastoral charge of the First Presbyterian church, which he retained until his death. Mr. MATTOCKS was elected a member of the Board of Education in this city in 1859, served in that capacity, and as secretary of the Board, and *ex officio* superintendent of the public schools, for a period of thirteen years.

Such is a brief sketch of the career of the Rev. JOHN MATTOCKS, but how utterly it fails to convey any adequate conception of the character of the man, of his devotion to religious principle, of his labors in the cause of his Master, and of his love to his fellow-men, without distinction of race or creed. Entirely averse to ostentation or parade, he went about doing good, and many bruised and broken hearts received from his lips that consolation which cometh alone from on high. He was probably more extensively known than any other religious teacher in this city, his long residence, his genial temper, and his position as superintendent of schools for so many years, having brought him into personal contact with all classes of our population. His charity knew no bounds, for he devoted a large portion of his slender resources to the poor and needy. He was a humble christian, with no tinge of the pharisee in his composition, and so far from being a bigot, he was catholic and tolerant in his views, albeit strongly attached to the denomination to which he belonged.

In fact, however others might disagree with him, he impressed every one with a conviction of his own sincerity. He was so well acquainted with human nature in all its phases, that he became all things to all men, so that he could win them to CHRIST. He felt that to be his mission upon the earth, and in his daily walk and conversation he manifested his devotedness to that object. His religion was not of the emotional kind, but his discourses from the pulpit were impressive, logical and convincing. He loved to dwell upon the abundant mercies of Our Heavenly Father, and to draw men to repentance by considerations of love to Him, rather than by the terrors of the law and the slavish fear of punishment. He took a deep interest in the revival movements of Messrs. WHITTLE and BLISS, being a constant attendant at their meetings, and a participant in the exercises.

The public services rendered by Mr. MATTOCKS, while superintendent of public schools for a long series of years, are well known and appreciated by this community. He contributed largely to the efficiency of these institutions, which have assumed a high rank among the educational agencies of the State. Having himself enjoyed the privileges of a full collegiate course, which he had supplemented with studies of a diversified character, he was eminently fitted to supervise the system of instruction in the schools, and to give them a strong impetus in the right direction. And so kind and gentle, and withal firm, was he in the discharge of his duties, that teachers and pupils alike revered and loved him.

The tender and touching tribute paid by Mr. MATTOCKS, at the last monthly meeting of the Society, and but a few days before his own death, to the memory of his co-laborer, Rev. Dr. MCMASTERS, will be long remembered by those who were present on that occasion.

It was my good fortune to become acquainted with Mr. MATTOCKS very soon after his advent to this city, and that acquaintance ripened into a friendship which was uninterrupted to the end of his life. I am happy to be afforded an opportunity, personally, to testify to his tenderness as a husband and father, his worth as a citizen, and his fidelity as a minister of CHRIST. He was called away suddenly while in

the possession of all his faculties, and in the vigor of mature manhood, before his force was diminished or his natural strength abated. It was, doubtless, the mode of death he would have selected if left to his own volition, for he was always mindful of the injunction of his Master, "Be ye also ready." He was saved from the tortures of a lingering disease, and the stroke which, in a few short hours, deprived him of life, was to him a crowning mercy, for it ushered him into the haven "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

To our deceased friend may be appropriately applied the words of the poet, inscribed originally to the memory of the old Scotch covenanter, who had been for forty years the faithful pastor of his congregation—

> "But in his duty prompt at every call,
> He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt for all;
> And as a bird each fond endearment tries
> To tempt its new fledg'd offspring to the skies,
> He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,
> Allur'd to brighter worlds, *and led the way.*"

III. REMARKS BY HON. JOHN B. SANBORN, AT A MEETING OF THE SOCIETY, DEC. 13, 1875, ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DEATH OF REV. JOHN MATTOCKS.

It may seem improper for the youngest member of the Board to utter words of eulogy upon our oldest and most valuable member, deceased.

But more than fifteen years have passed since we were intimate friends. From the Sunday when he preached his first sermon in Saint Paul, to the day of his death, his example, not less than his words, have been a constant guide and light through many of the dark scenes and periods of life, and I should do violence to my own feelings, if I did not utter a single word in commemoration of his virtues.

His life and example were such that all may study and follow them with profit.

He lived, as near as man may, a life of righteousness from righteous motives, and thereby complied with the highest moral code of any school. He pointed the moral of the great events of the world by the light of revealed religion, and his faith that all that seemed dark and inscrutable now, would, in the brighter light yet to be revealed, be plain and easily understood, was firm and unwavering.

He was a bold man, and dared to discuss from his pulpit all questions pertaining to the welfare of society or the church, with frankness and decision. His voice never gave forth any uncertain sound. The conservative tendency of his mind was too great for the accomplishment of the largest amount of good, with his mental and moral powers. But on great occasions this conservatism was all thrown aside, and he would become as decided and impetuous as the most thoughtless. Previous to our late war he had favored a most conservative course towards the south. But the sermon that he preached the Sunday after the attack upon forts Moultrie and Sumpter, was the most decidedly patriotic and national of any of that period, and is no doubt still fresh in the minds of all who heard it. He said blood must necessarily be shed now, to save oceans of blood that must otherwise be shed by coming generations, in the never ending strife that will follow the dissolution of the Union. He left no one in doubt as to what his duty was in the impending struggle, and he gave direction to the views of many, by his remarks on this and similar occasions.

No man ever lived who had a clearer perception of the "fitness of things." He was always in the right place. He entered into every occasion and every condition. He poured consolation into the hearts of mourners, with the same ease that he repressed and subdued boisterous or improper mirth, and was equally adapted to the festivities of the wedding altar, and solemnities of the funeral service.

He possessed large and varied learning, united to one of God's greatest gifts, sound, practical common sense. Ideas were his delight, while words without them were his disgust; and in his judgment the greatest attainment of literature was the expression of ideas in the pleasantest and most simple

manner. He advanced far into the mysteries of many sciences. Geology and astronomy were his delight, and in everything he saw constantly the handiwork of GOD.

Consistent and true in every relation of life, without ostentation and without guile, he consecrated all his attainments and all his powers to the welfare of man and the glory of GOD. Let not his example nor his teachings be forgotten.

IV. LETTER FROM RT. REV. JOHN IRELAND, D. D. COADJUTOR BISHOP OF ST. PAUL, PUBLISHED IN THE "FREEMAN'S JOURNAL," MAY 6, 1876.

ST. PAUL, March 30, 1876.

JOHN MATTOCKS, Esq., Chicago:

My Dear Sir:—I regret that pressing and unusual occupations have prevented me from expressing to you before now, my sentiments of deep respect, for the memory of your father, Rev. JOHN MATTOCKS, and of heartfelt sympathy for his family on the occasion of his lamented demise. I trust I will be allowed, even at this late hour, to add a word of mine to the many testimonials already given in favor of the singular worth of one whose friendship, during his lifetime, I very highly prized.

My acquaintance with Rev. Mr. MATTOCKS dates back some twelve years. During this period of time, one purpose or another frequently brought us together, and each meeting but increased the esteem which, from the first, I deemed it my duty to award him. His was a most noble nature—kind, affable and generous. I do not believe he was at any time capable of a harsh thought, or of a word that he could presume would wound the most sensitive soul. He was ever ready to do favors, to afford pleasure to others. The poor had reason to venerate his name, and, what is much to his praise, no ostentation accompanied or followed his good deeds. They were done as a matter of course. His mind was richly stored. The questions were few upon which he was not well

informed. His words, too, in conversation, or assemblies, in which he took part, indicated a man of thought and reflection. He had mastered the subject of his studies. He was free, in a remarkable degree, from all prejudices, or special bias of mind capable of warping his judgment in his estimate of men and things. He was uplifted far above sectarian narrow mindedness. While he proved himself most faithful, as I always heard, to the duties of his particular profession, his mind and heart could ever go abroad of the circle of his ministerial office, and sympathize with his fellow men of all classes, without regard to church or national differences. In a world where men so often labor to narrow down to themselves and to a few around them, their thoughts and feelings, it was most refreshing to come in contact with the man of the type of Rev. JOHN MATTOCKS. He was very frank and outspoken. You were always sure that there was no second thought lurking back of his word to you. Few clergymen become so universally acquainted in a community, as Rev. Mr. MATTOCKS was in St. Paul. Our citizens, of every class and profession, seemed to know him familiarly. I have never found one who was his enemy, or would not speak kindly of him, whenever his name would be mentioned. The universal regret expressed in our city when his death was made known, was the best tribute that could be rendered to his memory.

All felt that a good man had departed, who had been an honor to the city, and whom they fain would have kept with them for many long years. Men like him are too few in number. It would be a better, a kindlier world, were we to meet them oftener in the path of life. The sentiments which I have had towards Rev. Mr. MATTOCKS, I beg leave to extend to his children, with whom I sincerely condole in their present grief.

Most respectfully your friend,

JOHN IRELAND,
Co-Adjutor Bishop, etc.

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